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THE LIFE AND DEATH OF THE REVEREND FATHER,

and faithfull Seruant of GOD,

M. WILLIAM COWPER, Bishop of *Galloway*, who departed this life at *Edenburgh*, the 15. of February. 1619.

WHEREVNTO

IS ADDED A RESOLVTION penned by himselfe, some few dayes before *his death, touching the Articles concluded in* the late generall Assembly holden at PERTH, 1618.

LONDON,
Printed by *George Purslowe*, for *John Budge*, and are to be sold in Pauls Church-yard, at the Signe of the *Greene-Dragon*. 1619.

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Frank R. Brown - 10/26/39 (mf)

THE PREFACE.

IT is profitable, and considering the times we now liue in, very necessarie, that the liues & deaths of Gods faithfull seruants, (such as was this worthy Person) be registred, and commended to Posteritie (as well for examples to the liuing, that they may know how to walke in a good Conscience before God, as to preserue the fame of the righteous after their death, from the reprochful detractions of the wicked. And this last, charitie towards our Brethren departed, requires of vs them especially, when the wrong done vnto their memories, tends to the discrediting of the seruice, wherein they were by God imployed in the time of their life. For though it be true, that lyes and calumnies can neuer long preuaile, and that Truth, by some rightly called the Daughter of Time, will at last breake forth, as the light, and shine as the noone day, to the iustifying of them that haue feared the Lord, and beene carefull to approue their courses vnto him: yet in the meane while, preiudices may possesse the minds of many not euill affected: and while they lacke better information, by mis-reports they may be made to thinke and speake of persons and matters otherwise then they should. Neither can we be excused, if wee shall keepe si-

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lence, and forbeare to giue witnesse vnto the Truth; when peruerse men take such libertie, as we see, to vent lies both by speech and writing, onely to confirme others in wicked and rebellious courses. This respect, albeit there had been no other, is a sufficient reason for the publishing of this Discourse; written by that faithfull Seruant of God, of himselfe, some two yeeres before his departing, and since found amongst his papers: for as in his life there wanted not enemies to charge him with many false imputations, whereof himselfe did often complaine; so yet after his death, when humanitie it selfe might teach them not to disquiet the ashes of the dead, they forbeare not to lay vpon him and the manner of his death, false and foule aspersions, albeit no man, while he liued, did walk in all his wayes with a bitter conscience; nor any of the Saints of God did euer conclude his dayes more peaceably, and with better Resolution.

Concerning his life, which was not idle or fruitlesse, as his writings already come forth, and others that shortly will see the light, may sufficiently witnesse; wee remit you to this Discourse penned by himselfe, as it seemes, when he found his sicknes beginning, which put an end to his dayes: And for his death, whereof there were many witnesses, the forme and manner thereof we haue annexed, to stop the mouthes of vngodly men, and giue all that feare the Lord, an example of dying, and occasion of thankefulnes to Almighty God, who vouchsafed so mercifully to rid his seruant of the miseries of this life, and receiue him to his ioy, and that place of felicitie, where we are perswaded now he rests.

THE

THE LIFE AND DEATH OF W. COWPER, BISHOP OF *GALLOWAY*.

This Discourse was penned by himselfe *on the first of Ianuary.* 1616.

MY life hath not beene such, that I am ashamed to liue longer, if my gracious God haue any further seruice to employ mee withall in his Church: Neither am I so desirous to liue; but yet I am willing, and heartily content to remoue out of this body, that I may be with my Lord, freed from these restlesse tentations, which on euery side haue sore pressed, but, through his grace, neuer oppressed me.

In my younger yeeres I was trained vp with the wrestlings of God; from my youth I haue borne his yoke, exercised with his terrours; yet, so that many a time his sweet consolations haue refreshed

my ſoule. In my old dayes men haue riſen againſt me, but without a cauſe: betwixt theſe two my dayes are ſpent: my Witneſſe is in heauen, Hee knoweth that in euery ſtate of life, my heart was euer toward the Lord; it was my ioy to ſerue him, and my griefe when I ſinned againſt him.

Being of the age of eight yeere old, about Martimas I was carried by my father from *Edenborough* to Dunbar Schoole, I could not write, nor read any Latine then. I tarried there till my twelft yeere; euen then did the Lord beginne to acquaint my heart to ſeek him: we went two & two to the Church; he put then this prayer in my heart euery day in the way, Lord, bow mine eare, that I may heare thy Word. In the Schoole many a time haue I turned on my face, ſeeking from God knowledge and vnderſtanding. In the ſpace of foure yeeres and leſſe, I learned the whole courſe of Grammar, wherein God made me to proſper, not inferiour to others in the company with me.

From thence I was called by my Parents to *Edenborugh*, and in the entry of my 13. yeere, ſent ouer to S. *Andrewes*, and paſſed in courſe of Philoſophy there in the 16. yeere: there made I not ſuch progreſſe in knowledge, as I had done before in my other Studies, either mine age not being capable of it, or my wiſe and mercifull Father not thinking it expedient for me; yet euen there was the ſeede of grace ſtill working in me, inclining me to a carefull hearing and penning of Sermons, and Theologicall leſſons, as I could haue occaſion to heare them.

And

And heere Satan working in corrupt nature, ſought many a time to trap mee in his ſnares, intending in my young yeeres to giue mee that wound, that might haue beene a marke of ſhame to me in my old age, when the Lord ſhould call mee to doe his Worke: but as on the one part I felt my weakeneſſe compared with the ſtrength of corrupt nature; ſo though then I could not diſcerne it, afterward I had proofe it was the Lords preuenting mercy, that kept me from being an offence vnto his Church. It is his mercy that he pardoned the vanities and ignorances of my youth, and his mercy alſo that he preſerued me in all my life, from any that could make me a ſhame to his Saints, or a ſcorne and reproach to his enemies.

Hauing paſſed my courſe in S. *Andrewes* at the age of ſixteene yeeres, I returned to my Parents in Edenborough, I was preſſed by them to enter into ſundry ſorts of life I liked not; for my heart ſtill inclined to the ſtudy of holy Scriptures: wherevpon I reſolued to goe into *England*, where I euidently perceiued the Lord going before mee, and prouiding for me at *Hoddeſdon*, within eighteene mile of London, my meane portion which I had being all ſpent (I ſpeake it to his glory that cared for me:) in that ſame place, that ſame day was I deſired by our kind countriman Maſter *Guthrie*, to helpe him in the teaching of a Schoole; with whom I remained ſome three quarters of a yeere, but after did the Lord lead me further: for hauing occaſion to goe to London, without my knowledge, or any

ſuite

ſuite of mine, I was called to the ſeruice of a learned Diuine Mr. *Broughton*, vnto the which with good will of Mr. *Guthrie* I entred, and there remained about a yeere and a halfe, dayly exerciſed vnder him in the ſtudie of Theologie. To him vnder God, and ſome other learned Diuines of that City, do I acknowledge my ſelfe bound for theſe beginnings of knowledge I then receiued.

In the nineteenth yeere of my life, I returned againe to *Edenborough*, where hauing the commodious occaſion to bee with my elder Brother, then one of the Miniſters of *Edenborough*, I ſtill continued in the ſame ſtudy, and at length was required to giue a proofe of my gift priuately, which I did in the new Church in preſence of Mr. *Robert Pont*, and Mr. *Robert Rollock*, with ſundry others of the Miniſtery: then after that, I was required to teach publikely in the new Church on a Sabbath in the afternoone. And the next weeke I was commanded to teach publikely in the great Church, in time of a Faſt, on a Thurſday in the afternoone. Thus did the Lord traine me vp, and theſe were the beginnings of my Miniſtery, which I recount to the praiſe of his grace, who counted me faithfull, and put me in his ſeruice.

A little after that, in the beginning of my twentieth yeere, there enſued a generall Aſſembly of the Church at *Edenborough*, & by their authority was I ſent out and appointed Paſtor of *Bothkenner* in Stirling Shire, for that Church had beene deſolate euer ſince the reformation, and the people had

giuen

giuen in their supplication to the Assembly for a Pastor. This calling of God and his Church I imbraced and went vnto them, where I found the desolation so great, that except the walls, which were ruinous also, neither dore, nor window, nor seat, nor Pulpit, nor any part of a roofe was there at all; yet pleased it God to giue such a blessing to the Ministry of his Word, that their hearts thereby were stirred vp cheerefully to build the Lords House, which most willingly they fully resolued within halfe a yeere, not content to build their own part of the House, but the Quire also, which of due should haue beene done by the Parson: there needed heere no letters of horning nor other compulsitories: neither content to haue built it onely, they adorned it within and without it, not inferiour to any other Church of such quality round about it. This was my first externall seale, and confirmation of my calling to the Ministery.

In this seruice I remained seuen or eight yeeres, subiect to great bodily infirmities, by reason of the weakenesse of the Soyle in Winter, and the vnwholesome waters thereof. And heere did the Lord first begin to acquaint me with his terrours, and the inward exercises of sundry sorts of tentations; so that betweene these two, my life was almost wasted with heauinesse; yet I blesse the Lord for it, it was vnto me like the wildernesse of *Midian* to *Moses*, a Schoole of tentation, whereby I learned dayly more and more to know Christ Iesus, gathering some store of knowledge thereby, inward

exercises, and outward studies, which the Lord afterward called me to giue out in more publik places in his Church, for the necessity of increasing, disease forcing me to bethinke of a transportation, the purpose of my mind was to another Church vnplanted in the South, some 8. mile from *Edenborough*, but the Lord still continued his calling, and drew mee another way Northward: for at the same time, there interuented a generall Assembly of the Church at *Perth*: there was I nominated, and with consent of the Assembly and people was I written for to that Ministery, as the letters of both, sent to me out of *Perth*, with my deare Brother M^r. *Patrick Simson*, yet extant do beare. Thus did the Lord cleare my way before me, and leade me there, where I thought neuer to haue gone; yet two or three dayes before, did the Lord giue me some signification of it, but I vnderstood it not, till the euent did teach me: for in my thoughts in the night, there seemed a man to lead me by the hand to a little pleasant City, in a plaine valley on a riuers side, hauing some bankes lying at the shoare thereof (as indeede it had the first time, that after this I was brought to it, such a sight got I of it, in that vision, as afterward I saw with my eyes) hee led me a long time vp and downe the streetes of that Towne from one to another, at length carried me ouer the water to an hill, and led me vp vnto it, by many turnings and windings from one earth to another, very neere vnto the top thereof. Then did I awake, my face looking to the South-

west.

west. This made such an impression in my minde as after that I could neuer get forgotten. Let no mā heere impute to me, the superstition either of Papists or Anabaptists. I know, there is no reuelation now of doctrine, or new article of faith, to be sought out in dreames. The Lord hath spoken once for all now vnto vs by his Sonne in the Word; but that the liuing Lord who sleepes not, can giue warnings to the soules of his seruants, when their bodies are sleeping, no man acquainted with his working, I trust will deny it.

After this, three or foure dayes, as I said, returned Mr. *Patrick Simson* from the generall Assembly at *Perth*, to *Sterling*, and deliuered me Letters from the Assembly and the towne, containing my calling to that Ministerie. The towne shortly after sent their Commissioners, to transport my selfe and my Family. There I continued doing the worke of God, for the full space of nineteene yeeres. How I did carry my selfe in my open conuersation, liuing amongst them not as one separate from them, but mixed my selfe in all their fellowships, as a comfort to the best, and a wound to the worst inclined sort, this Age will not want louing witnesse to record it. My diligence in like manner in the Ministerie, not onely on the ordinarie dayes, but on others, which I voluntarily chose thrice a weeke in the euening: to wit, Wednesday, Friday, and Saturday, for a preparation to the Sabbath, (for these dayes they had no preaching in the morning;) It would haue done a Christian heart

good, to haue ſeene thoſe glorious and ioyfull Aſſemblies, to haue heard the zealous cryings to God among that people with ſighings & teares, melting hearts and mourning eyes. I ſpeake the truth in modeſtie, and not all the truth. It is not vaine-glorying, I abhorre that; not I, but his grace in me. Why ſhall it offend any man, that I eate the fruit of my labour, and that my conſcience this day enioyes the comfort of my former painfulnes, and fidelitie? My witneſſe is in heauen, that the loue of Ieſus and his People, made continuall preaching my pleaſure, and I had no ſuch ioy, as in doing his worke. Some witneſſes alſo I want not to remaine: For albeit my charge was to teach fiue times in the weeke, yet this was more, that I penned thereafter, whatſoeuer I preached, whereof ſome are already extant, others, by Gods grace, if the Lord ſpare my dayes, ſhall come in their time. And in outward things, what care I had to ſee the Houſe of God there honoured, the welfare of that people euery way, there are monuments ſtanding to witnes for me, when I am dead.

All this time, except ſome little intermiſſions and breathing times, did the LORD ſtill exerciſe mee with inward tentations. O what a viciſſitude of eſtates! O what a varietie of combates! It were tedious here to ſet them downe all, as they were done and fought: but this I muſt ſay, the end of all and euery one of them were vnſpeakeable ioy. And once for all, in greateſt extremitie of horrour, and anguiſh of

Spirit, when I had vtterly giuen ouer, and looked for nothing but confusion, suddenly did there shine (in the very twinckling of an eye) the bright and lightsome countenance of God proclaiming peace, and confirming peace with inuincible reasons. O what a change was there in a moment? The silly soule that was euen now at the brinke of the pit, looking for nothing, but to be swallowed vp, was instantly raised vp to Heauen, to haue ioyfull fellowship with God in Christ Iesus; and from this day forth my soule was neuer troubled with such extremitie of terrours. This confirmation was giuen me on a Saturday in the morning; there found I the power of Religion, the certaintie of the Word: there was I touched with such liuely sense of a diuinitie, and power of the Godhead, in mercy reconciled with man, & with me in Christ, as I trust, my soule shall neuer forget: Glory, glory, glory be to the ioyfull Deliuerer of my soule out of all aduersities for euer.

In the middest of these wrestlings with God, all this time wanted I not combates with wicked men, like those Beasts at *Ephesus*, with whom Saint *Paul* did fight. All the time of my residens yeere continued this battell; as one left off, another still renewing the battell: but the greatnes of my inward conflicts made me regard lightly all their outward contradictions, and I esteemed them but like the bitings of a Flea. I resolued with my selfe, It was no maruell to see Satan stirre vp his wicked instruments to disquiet mee, since I pro-

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feſſed my ſelfe a diſquieter of him, and his Kingdome: yea my cõfort was, that I had neuer a controuerſie with any of them but for their ſinnes: God knowes I loued their perſons and eſtates; therefore did the Lord aſsiſt me, the power of his Word hammering downe their pride, they were al of them by courſe brought to the acknowledgement of their ſinnes.

But at length, as God turned the heart of *Pharaoh* and his people from the Iſraelites, when the time came that hee would haue them to remoue out of Egypt: ſo by little and little did the zeale and loue of the moſt of this people, at leaſt, in my ſenſe, fall away; ſo that at laſt, my battell was not with ſuch as were like the Publicans and ſinners, (for theſe now were turned my fauourers and comforters,) but with ſuch as ſeemed before Iuſticiars, I meane, vnrebukeable men for outward offences: Theſe men found I ſtuffed with ſuch pride, ſelfe-conceit, diſdaine, and intolerable contempt, as carried them further frõ their dutie, then any of the former: yea, ſuch as aboue others ſhould haue beene my comforters, were my croſſers: That I had cauſe to ſay with *Micah*, The beſt of them are Bryers. But I truſt it repents them ere now: And therefore pray I God not to lay it to their charge. I will haue none of my words extended to that handfull there, which truely feare the Lord.

Now about this time God had opened to me a doore, and called mee to the charge of the

Churches in *Galloway*, in the South-west part of this Kingdom: for being named with others, by the generall Assembly of such as they thought meet to be preferred to the Episcopall dignitie (whereof I euer acknowledged my selfe not worthy) and recommended by the Fathers of our Church; it was his Maiesties pleasure to present mee to that Benefice, due to the office whereunto the Church had called me. God knowes, this was done without my knowledge, or seeking, directly or indirectly. For I could haue been contented all my dayes with a priuate life, resolued to giue honour and obedience in God to such as were called to these places; after that once it was established by order in our Church, and I had considered the lawfulnes, antiquitie, and necessitie of it among vs.

Here was I neither guiltie of Ambition, nor of any precipitate embracing of it; for betweene the date of his Ma: presentation, and my acceptation, there interuened eighteene weekes.

Yet as the Calling to this Worke was greater, then any other whereto I had been led before, so greatest opposition was there made vnto mee by men, whose lying Libels, and carnall contradictions forced me to spend more time vnprofitably, then I had done before since my entry to the Ministerie. The Lord forgiue them, and me also where, in the maner of my answering, I haue been sharper then became Christian meeknes. For as to the matter it selfe vnfainedly I followed my light, I esteeme it a lawfull, ancient, and necessarie gouern-

gouernment; I see not, nor haue not read of any Church that wanted it before our time: Onely the abuses of it by pride, tyranny and idlenes, haue brought it in misliking. From these euils I pray the Lord preserue his seruants, that now are, or hereafter shall be called to those places; but there is no reason why a thing good in it selfe, should be condemned or reiected, for the euill of abuse: for so no good thing at all should bee retained in the Church. And in this Calling how I haue walked, and what my care was to aduance the Gospell there, I trust I shall not, nor yet doe want witnesses.

In this estate doe I now liue; my soule alway in mine hand, ready to bee offered to my God; where, or what kinde of death, God hath prepared for me, I know not: but sure I am, there can be no euill death to him that liueth in Christ, nor sodaine death to a Christian Pilgrime, who, as *Iob* sayes, euery day waites for his change, yea, many a day haue I sought it with teares, not out of impatience, distrust, or perturbation, but being weary of sin, & fearfull to fall into it. Concerning those who haue beene my enemies without cause, and charged me with many wrongfull imputations, from which my conscience cleares me, excusing me of these things, loue of gaine, and glory, or such like whereof they accused me: The Lord lay it not to their charge. I go to my Father, & wish his blessing to them, to rectifie their iudgements, & moderate their affections with true pietie from faith & loue.

AMONGST

AMONGST THE SAME Papers, wee found three short Meditations, *whereby he comforted himselfe, whilest* he found his death approching, written also with his owne hand, and bearing date the seuenth of *December.* 1618.

NOw my soule be glad: at all parts of this prison, the Lord hath set to his Pioners to loose thee, Head, Feet, Milt & Liuer are fast failing; yea the middle strength of the whole body, the stomake is weakened long agoe. Arise, make ready, shake off thy fetters, mount vp from the body, and goe thy way.

Let me tell you that which I know, yea foreknow, yet I, after others haue foretasted before you. Death is somewhat drierie, & the streames of that Iordan betweene vs and our Canaan, runne furiously; but they stand still, when the Arke commeth. Let your Author be cast within the vaile, and fastned on the Rocke Iesus: Let the end of the three-fold cord bee buckled to the heart, so shall yee goe thorow what threds the cord is made of. I cannot now tarrie to tell you, who knowes: but if ye aske, God will teach you.

I saw not my children when they were in the wombe; there the Lord fed them without my knowledge: I shall not see them when I goe

out of the body; yet shall they not vvant a Father.

This faithfull Seruant of God, who from the time of his entrie into the Ministerie had alwayes shewed himselfe diligent and painefull in his Calling; notwithstanding that his Sicknes grew dayly vpon him, was no way deficient in his duties of ordinarie preaching, taking great paines also to perfit his Worke vpon the Reuelation, which he had begunne, and desired greatly to finish it before his dying. Besides which studies, the griefe he conceiued for the backwardnes of vnruly spirits, in giuing obedience to the Articles concluded in the late Assembly, and ratified by authoritie, to the great disturbance of the Peace of the Church, which hee laboured carefully in all his life to procure, did hasten him not a little to his end. So as in the beginning of *Ianuary* 1619. his infirmitie increasing, hee was compelled to keepe at home, and not to goe any more abroad: yet as his weakneſſe did permit, hee gaue himselfe to reuise his writings, and dispose of his worldly affaires, that hee might bee ready for his passage, which euery day hee expected. And some ten dayes before his departure, hauing his minde freed of all earthly businesse, to those that visited him, hee manifested a great contentment hee had in his approching death. The Wednesday before, which was the tenth of *February*, The Bishops & some other Brethren beeing assembled at *Edenborough* for certaine

taine affaires of the Church, tooke occasion to meete at his house because of his Sickneſſe, which hee tooke moſt kindly, and continued with them that whole afternoone, giuing very wholeſome aduice in matters propounded, and ſhewing himſelfe as pleaſant and iocund in ſpeeches as euer before. Howbeit, euen then hee ſignified to them that his death was drawing neere, and declared his minde ſomewhat diſpoſedly, concerning his Succeſſor. The dayes following, hee kept with all that came to viſit him in moſt holy and Diuine conferences, expreſſing a great willingnes of exchanging this life, with that better. And vpon Munday which was the fifteenth of *February*, at one of the clocke in the afternoone, feeling his ſtrength and ſpirits to decay, after hee had conceiued a moſt heauenly prayer, in the company of thoſe that were by him, he deſired to be laid in bed, (for the dayes before he aroſe alwayes, and either walked or ſate in his Chamber:) which being done, after he had againe commended himſelfe moſt deuoutly vnto Almightie God, he tooke ſome quiet reſt: after which he ſpake not many words, but thoſe that hee vttered ſhew his memory and other ſenſes to haue beene perfect, his tongue onely failing him; and in this ſort about ſeuen of the clocke at night, he rendred his ſoule to God in a moſt quiet and peaceable manner. His body the ſeuenteenth of *February* was interred, according to his owne direction, in the Churchyard,

called the *Blacke-Friers* at *Edenborough*, in the South-side of the new Church, and was conueyed to the place by the Earl of *Dumfermeline*, Chancellor, and the reſt of the Honourable Lords of Councell, with the Magiſtrates of the Citie, and many others. The Funerall Sermon being preached by the moſt Reuerend Father in God, the Arch-biſhop of S^t. *Andrewes*.

THE

THE BISHOP OF GALLOWAY HIS answers to such as desire a resolution of their scruples against the *Acts of the last Assembly holden at* Perth in the month of *August*, 1618.

Mercy, grace and peace be vnto all them that loue the Lord Iesus.

WEe are commanded by S. *Peter* to giue a reason of that faith which is in vs, and so will I: No good Christian differs one from another in any Article of faith: for our beliefe is a short compend of the Scripture, and I haue preached all the Articles thereof, I beleeue all.

As for Papists, where they differ from vs, see what I haue professed in my writings, published in Print, and I am resolued to dye in the same minde: what that is, they may perceiue by the se-

uen dayes conference betwixt a Catholike Christian, and a Catholike Roman.

By that threefold Treatise vpon the 8. to the Romans.

By that Anatomy of a Christian.

By that Alphabet for Sions Schollers.

By that Treatise of *Iacobs* wrastling with God.

And that of Christs Genealogie.

And another, of his Baptisme.

And the third, of his combate with Satan in the Wilderneſſe.

By that which I intituled, A defiance to Death.

By that Preparatiue to the new Passeouer.

By the Treatises of good newes from Canaan, on the 51. Psalme.

By the Heauenly Mansions, and the Praise of Patience.

By the Conuersion of the Prodigall Sonne.

By that comfortable Dialogue betwixt God and a troubled Soule.

And that begun Commentary vpon the Apocalyps; beside many others.

These haue done good to many good Christians, and I hope, shall doe when I am gone. And as for these needeleſſe controuersies that make diuers voyces among vs: I say, some conscientious with little knowledge, these I loue, others contentious with leſſe knowledge, these I pitty, willing them alwayes to remember, that to them who are contentious and disobey the truth, and obey vnrighteousneſſe, shall be indignation and wrath, *Rom.* 2. 1.

yet

yet wishing to them mercy and light to illuminate their mindes.

OF DAYES.

IN my minde, no King on earth, no Church may make an Holy-day, only the Lord who made the day, hath that prerogatiue, and he hath sanctified the seuenth Day, yet either a Christian King or a Church may separate a day by preaching, and that either ordinary as we haue Tuesday, or extraordinary for fasting and humiliation, or then for solemne ioy and thanksgiuing. This is, and hath been euer the lawfull practice of our Church, and continuall, who at such times hath commanded cessation from ordinary trades, both before and after noone, that so the people might frequent the Assembly, I hope, no other purpose be in our Prince's Proclamation, whereat so many are offended: & if any cause of offence bee, it is to be mended with humble supplication, not with rebellious contradiction. *Brightman* on the 11. of the *Reuel.* records, that the day wherein Queen *Elizabeth* came to the Crowne, after the *Marian* persecutions, was obserued with a anniuersary or yeerely Sermon, euen by those who in that country are enemies to Episcopal gouernment, of which number himselfe is one. So we haue preaching and publike reioycing the 5. dayes of August and November, for that double deliuerance of our gracious Soueraign, whom the Lord may long continue a comfort to his Church: and I am sure, we haue greater cause to re-

reioyce at the remebring of Christ his Natiuity: Albeit, *Herod* & *Herodians* in vpper *Ierusalem* were against it, when Angels, heauenly Souldiers, and Saints redeemed were singing in *Bethlehem*, *Glory bee to God in Heauen, and peace to men on earth*, I will rather sing with the one, then startle with out cause with the other. O but this is not the day of His Natiuity. I answere, Let it be so: it is not the day, but the benefite we remember, which no good Christian will deny should be done: sure it is, hee was borne, dyed vpon Good Fryday, and the 3. day hee rose, the 40. day after hee ascended, ten dayes after his Ascension, he sent the Holy Ghost, which from his resurrection is the 50. day, called *Acts* 2. the Pentecest: all this is according to the Articles of our faith, expresly set downe in Scripture: and why do then men make such scruple to remember our Lords Natiuity, in such a day as Christian Catholikes, in all ages haue remembred it? But here they say, Wee remember his Natiuity euery day. I answere, This is like that presumption of the young man who spake to Christ in the Gospell, *All these* (saith hee) *haue I done from my youth*. He spoke out of ignorance, affirming he had done the thing he did not: And so do they. I appeale to their owne consciences, how many dayes of the yeere will passe, wherein they haue not so much as minde of his Natiuity? But if so were as they say, that they remember his Natiuity oberly day, why make they it strange to remember it on this day also? Yet (say they) yee remember it this

day more then another. I answere, And why euery good Christian hath his owne dayes chosen by himselfe; some for fasting, some for thanksgiuing for particular benefits; what a priuate Christian may lawfully doe, ye make it vnlawfull, a Christian Church to doe specially; where wee goe in the Communion of Saints, with all the present Reformed Churches in *Europe*. In *France* there most notable Preachers giue the Comunion on that day, as did also the ancient Primitiue Churches throughout the world, as testifieth S. *Augustine* in his *Epist.* 118. 119. So did our own old Scottish Church also, for 800. yeeres after Christ, before euer it was polluted with Papistry, as I haue prooued in my forenamed Conference; whoso likes to read it. But (say they) wee haue no commandement in the Word to doe it. For answer, Let them distinguish betwixt that which is substantiall or reall, in Religion, and that which is circumstantiall or rituall. A point substantiall, must haue an expresse warrant in the Word commanding it: For that which is circumstantiall it is sufficient, if it bee not against the Word, it being left to be ordained by Ecclesiasticall authoritie. As for example: to preach in season and out of season, is a substantiall point: For it, we haue an expresse command in the Word: what day of the weeke ordinary preaching should bee beside the Sabbath, that is circumstantiall, and left to the determination of the Church, who by the same authoritie, that they may ordaine preaching such a day of the weeke, may also ordain preaching

ſuch a day of the moneth in a yeere. Againe, hee that ſinnes openly, ſhall be openly rebuked. This is ſubſtantiall in Religion, and wee haue an expreſſe command for it. But to ſet him on a Pillar three dayes, or moe, or fewer, is circumſtantiall: ſuch as our Church, without doing wrong againſt the Word of God, hath determined, I acknowledge it to be a good order. And will any of theſe men condemne it, becauſe it is not an expreſſe command in the Word? *Marriage is honorable among all men*; for man and woman to ioyne without Marriage, is Fornication: this is ſubſtantiall, and hath the warrant of the Word: But that firſt they muſt bee three dayes publikely proclaimed, that is circumſtantiall, done by the Church for good order, which I acknowledge ſufficient, becauſe it is not againſt the Word.

Euill day, ſay they, was caſt out of our Church. For anſwere, what they call euill day, I know not: but a day reputed for the day of Chriſts Natiuitie, & obſerued for remembrance therof, that I know. I find no Eccleſiaſticall Law in all the books of our Aſſembly ſtanding to the contrary. But if it haue been caſt out, yet a thing not againſt the Word of God, vpon good conſiderations may be brought in againe, albeit it had been caſt out. Inſtances of this I might bring from the Church of *Geneua*. One I bring from our owne; ſince Baptiſme, not vpon a preaching day was caſt out by act and practice, and yet is now receiued againe: Why may not preaching of Chriſts Natiuitie, Paſſion, Reſurrection,

rection, Ascension, and sending of the holy Ghost on such dayes be receiued againe, albeit it had bin cast out? We were well, say they, before: what needs this nouation? For answer, Conformity with the ancient and recent reformed Churches requires it, except we wil be singular. Beside this, the question heere is betwixt a Prince and his People. They will be nourished in their humors, not remembring that a Christian Prince is also to be regarded, who findes himselfe bound in conscience to see duties in Religion performed: what is euill in their eyes, seemeth good in his. And heere the debate falling betwixt their will & his, about a matter not against the Word of God, let any indifferent man giue sentence who should be followed.

OF BAPTISME to be ministred in due time and place.

NOw for Baptisme; Our Commission is to baptize, without limitation either of time or place, decencie alway both for time and place being obserued: so farre as may be: where the publike order of the Church is not contemned, Baptisme should not be refused. It is not, will they say, necessary to saluation. I grant that: I abhorre that blinde and mercilesse sentence of Papists, that Infants dying without Baptisme, go to any house of Hell. But albeit it bee not necessary to the childes saluation, who wil deny, but it is a necessary, at the least, a profitable help of the Parents faith? For our Lord hath not ordained it in vaine. Where then a Christian

parent requires it to his child, either vpon a preaching day, or other day, with what warrant a Preacher can deny it, I know not.

OF PRIVATE COMMVNION.

THe same is my iudgement of Priuate Cõmunion. Heere are two words would be well vnderstood. Priuate I call it, in respect of the publike assembly, not of a priuate person; Communion it is, in respect of many Christians partaking it. Where a man hath beene a reuerent hearer of the Word in the publike Assembly, and a reuerent & carefull receiuer of the Sacrament there, if God suspend him by sicknes from doing of that dutie, may wee not sit beside him, and comfort him by the Word? may we not pray together for him, and for our selues, euen in a priuate Family? And why also may we not giue to him, and take to our selues the Seales of the Couenant of mercy? The particular precepts hereof, both for the person and place, I take not vpon mee to determine, but leaue it to the wisedome of the Preacher.

OF KNEELING AT THE COMMVNION.

THe hardest point of all, is Kneeling at the holy Communion, which is the more misliked, because it was, and yet is abused by Papists, to Idolatrie: that vile errour of transubstantiation, and worshipping of Bread, my soule abhorreth it. But it is hard to condemne a thing lawfull in it selfe, because it hath been abused: For what is so good, that hath

hath not or may not be abused? Shal not S. *Paul* bow his knees to the Father of the whole Family in Heauen and in Earth, God the Creator; because Idolaters bow their knees to the Creature? he was not so scrupulous. If I should condemne Sitting at the Table, I should doe wrong to my Mother the Church of *Scotland*. If I should condemne Standing, I should doe wrong to that Sister Church of *France*, which hath stood for the Truth to the bloud. If I should condemne Kneeling, I should do wrong to the Church of *England*, glorious with many Crownes of Martyrdome, and many other Churches also. I like well that modest iudgement of *Peter Martyr*, who thinkes any of these, Sitting, Standing, or Kneeling, lawfull. Our Church hath determined, that Kneeling seemes the most reuerent forme, for receiuing so great a benefit: and the rude gesture of many of our People, in many parts of the Land, requires that they should be led to a greater reuerence of that holy Mysterie, & taught that by humble Kneeling, wee shall at length bee brought to a ioyful Sitting with Him for euer. But here it will be obiected to mee, that our Lord and his Disciples sate at the Table. I answere; The Euangelist saith, that as He sate at the Table, he took Bread, and gaue thankes. This seemeth to note the time of the Institution; to wit, after hee had done with the naturall and Paschall Supper, not the gesture: For why? S. *Paul* prescribing all that is essentiall in the Sacrament, makes no mention neither of Sitting, Standing, nor Kneeling: Yet he sayes, *what*

I haue receiued of the Lord, that I deliuer to you. If he receiued it, and deliuered it not, hee was not faithfull. Which I abhorre to thinke. If he deliuered it not, then ſure he receiued it not. This is the ſoundeſt & moſt ſafe courſe: It keepeth all the reformed Churches free from doing againſt the Word of God. For wee muſt thinke, that S. *Paul* knew certainly the mind of Chriſt: ſuch as are *conſcientious*, let them ponder this well, the contentious I am not able to ſatisfie. If the expediency bee ſet aſide, and the queſtion be only of the lawfulnes, my Argument ſtãds yet vnanſwered. Whatſoeuer ſpirituall benefit I may lawfully ſeeke on my knees with Supplication, that ſame I may receiue lawfully vpon my knees with thankſgiuing. But I may lawfully with ſupplication ſeeke ſaluation by Ieſus on my knees: Therefore I may lawfully receiue it on my knees. They anſwere nothing, who ſay, I may not kneele to an Idoll: For to Chriſt I kneele, praiſing him when I receiue the holy Symbols, & exhibiting inſtruments of his Body & Bloud: and it is madnes either to make them Idols, as Papiſts doe, or call them Idols, as Malecontents doe.

Great murmuring is now againſt Paſtors, vvho ply not their tongues to pleaſure the humours of people. God hath opened their mouthes to preach his Goſpel; woe will bee to them that open their mouth to prattle againſt Paſtors. Hee that rewardeth euill for good, euill ſhall neuer depart from his houſe, ſaith *Salomon*, *My ſonne, feare God and the King, and meddle not with the ſeditions*: It is *Salomons* alſo.

also. Let seditious Prattlers, or Libellers, whom though I know, I spare to name, pause vpon this. When vnthankfull *Israel* murmured against *Moses* and *Aaron*, they both ran to the dore of the Tabernacle, and the Lord failed them neuer. Hee came downe in the Cloud, to protect & comfort them. Let al the seruants of the Lord doe so, when an vngratefull people renders them euill for good; remembring that which the Lord said to *Ieremy* 15. 19, 20. *Let them returne to thee, returne not thou to them. They shall fight against thee, but shal not preuaile against thee: for I am with thee. Blessed are yee when men reuile you, and persecute you, and say all manner of euill against you falsely for my sake: Reioyce & be glad, for great is your reward in Heauen: for so persecuted they the Prophets, which were before you*, Math. 6. 11.

I haue opened my minde according to my light. To the that aske, Where was this light before? my answere is, Remember what is said of our blessed Lord, the Latchet of whose Shoo I am not worthy to loose. *He increased in wisedome*, *Luc.* 2. 52. Shall it then be an imputation to his silly, weake, vnworthy and infirme seruants, that they increase in wisedome, and grow in knowledge, as they are commanded? Such as are contentious, I leaue tumbling in the tumultuous thoughts of their perturbed minds, raging like the waues of the Sea, forming and casting out their own dirt and shame. For me, I rest in the peace of my God, through Iesus Christ, which, blessed be God, I enioy. A sore famin of the Word of God is at hand, for the loathing

ing of Manna, and murmuring against *Moyses* and *Aaron*: there may be bread, but God will breake the Staffe of it; preaching of the Word in many parts, but without life or power. Prattlers, & lying Libellers, Papists, or Atheists, I commend them to the mercy of God, that they may be brought to repentance. Let them reade these words of our Saiour, Math. 7. 6. *Give not that which is holy vnto Dogs, neither cast ye your Pearles before Swine*: Bee not of that number, if ye minde to enter into that heauenly Ierusalem. I will haue nothing spoken heere, extended to peaceable and truely religious Christians, of which number God hath a flourishing Church, both in this Towne, and in other parts of the Land: The Lord increase them. The Lord grant peace to his owne Ierusalem, and haue mercy vpon vs, that wee may preuent these, and other imminent iudgements vpon great and small, with vnfained repentance.

FINIS.

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